

VISIT...

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372
75¢
CAN 95¢
U.K. 30p
JUNE 84
APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

BAT MAN



8...

9...

10...

YOU'RE
OUT!

THE NEW



THERE'S NO
STOPPING
US NOW.

FIANNIGA
GIORDANO

IN A BASEMENT ON GOTHAM'S UPPER WEST SIDE, DR. FANG SWEATS.

THERE ARE THREE KINDS OF PEOPLE IN THE FIGHT GAME, WOOD.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO **MAKE** THE RULES--THE PROMOTERS, COMMISSIONERS, JUDGES, AND ALL THE OTHERS WITH BELLIES TOO FAT TO FIT BETWEEN THE **ROPE**S.

THE FIGHTERS THEMSELVES ARE **SUBSERVIENT** TO THE RULES.



AND FINALLY THERE ARE THOSE WHO BECAME **INDEPENDENT** OF THE RULES--BUT ONLY BY WALKING AWAY FROM THE ENTIRE SCENE FOREVER.

YEAH, BUT THE KINDA FIGHT YOU WANNA FIX--A HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE SHOT WITH HEAVY ACTION BUT HEAVY ODDS TOO... A FIGHT LIKE THAT DON'T **EXIST**--IT'S A **CONTRADICTION** IN TERMS.

YOU'RE **DREAMIN'**, BOSS.

WHAT PRICE, THE PRIZE?

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BATMAN 372 (USPS 045-340) Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. Second class postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., PO Box 1308-F, Fort Lee, NJ 07024. Annual subscription rate \$9.00. Outside USA \$10.00. Copyright © 1984 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. Printed in USA. Advertising Representative: Sanford Schwarz & Co., 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400. DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company

IF SO, I'M DREAMING ABOUT HOW I COULD HAVE WON THE TITLE, HAD I BEEN **SUBSERVIENT** RATHER THAN **INDEPENDENT**.

AND PERHAPS I'M **STILL** DREAMING ABOUT PUTTING MY MARK ON THE TITLE--

—NOT BY FIGHTING OR WALKING AWAY, BUT BY **MAKING NEW RULES**.

EVERY PRIZE FIGHT HAS ITS **PRICE**, WOOD.

WE'RE GOING TO **FIX** THE PRICE AND **WIN** THE PRIZE-- THE TITLE **AND** A FORTUNE.

HOW?

IMAGINE I JUST CAUGHT YOU WITH A **PERFECT RIGHT CROSS**, DRIVING YOUR HEAD **NINETY DEGREES TO THE RIGHT...**

TOMMY DU

HEY, YOU ALMOST HIT M--

THAT'S TOMMY DUNFEY.

AGAINST THE CHAMP, HE'D BE A FIVE TO ONE UNDERDOG--FIGHTS OUT OF BRONK'S 10th STREET GYM UNDER A TRAINER NAMED RUDY.

I WANT YOU TO GO TO 10th STREET, WOOD-- TALK TO RUDY.

NO, BUT--

AND MY GREATEST ROLE ON THE STAGE WAS **DRACULA**.

YEAH, I KNOW, BUT--

THAT'S WHY, WHEN I LEFT BOTH THOSE WORLDS **BEHIND**--

--I TOOK THE NAME **DR. FANG**.

10th STREET, WOOD, AND TALK **PERSUASIVELY**. THINK OF IT AS TRAINING FOR A LATER, BIGGER BOUT--

--WHEN YOU'LL HAVE TO TALK TO THE **CHAMP**--AND KNOCK HIM **DEAD**.

THIRTY-TWO BLOCKS
SOUTH...

HE'S
MINE,
ROBIN.

FRAKT

YOU SAID
IT, BATMAN--
A RIGHT HOOK
WORTHY OF
THE CHAMP!

BUT THE CLOAKED AVENGER
OF THE NIGHT IS NOT PLEASED...

MAYBE, ROBIN,
BUT HARDLY WORTH
USING ON THIS
CHEAP HOOD.

AND THERE'S NO SIGN OF
DR. FANG ANYWHERE-- HE
HASN'T MADE A MOVE
IN WEEKS.

WELL, WE DID
PUT A SIZABLE DENT
IN HIS GANG.

IN GOTHAM,
HIRED THUGS
ARE A DIME A
DOZEN, ROBIN.
HE COULD--

EH? WHAT'S
THAT?

IT'S FANG'S
PHONY
CANINE.

I DECIDED
TO WEAR IT
UNTIL WE
CATCH
HIM-- TO
REMINDE ME
OF HOW
STRONG
AND FAST
HE IS...

...AND HOW I ALMOST
LOST MY THROAT TO HIM.

I SEE.

JUST DON'T
LET IT BECOME...
A FETISH.





OH HELL, HAROLD, I HAD
/DOES MYSELF ONCE--LET
HIM IN.

HE
WHITE.

YOU SAY THAT
WORD LIKE IT'S
SOME KIND OF
POISON.

AIN'T
IT?



MAYBE, BUT I'VE
TASTED IT SO
MANY TIMES I'M
IMMUNE
BY NOW.

SAY, ACE--MY
BODYGUARD SAYS
YOU'RE A FIGHTER.
IS THAT JUST WHEN YOU'RE
FORCIN' YOUR WAY
THROUGH SOMEBODY'S
DOOR OR YOU EVER
DARE THE RING?

MY NAME'S TOMMY
DUNFEY--YOU PROB'LY DON'T
RECOGNIZE ME CUZ I NEVER
FOUGHT ON TV IN A BIG-
PURSE BOUT...



IT'S AN
HONOR TO
MEET YOU,
MR. GREENE.



... WHICH IS
WHY I COME
HERE--

--TO
RECTIFY
THAT BY ASKIN'
YOU PERSONAL
FOR A SHOT.

A SHOT--?
AT ME?



AT YOUR BELT--
BUT DON'T WORRY,
NOT BELOW IT.

AT THE HEAVYWEIGHT
CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE WORLD?
IS THAT WHY YOU CAME HERE?



RATHER GO TO MY
GRANDMA'S HOUSE,
BUT SHE AIN'T GOT
WHAT I WANT.

LEMME GET THIS
STRAIGHT--YOU THINK
BY JUST POUNDIN' ON
MY DOOR, YOU GET
WHAT YOU WANT?

I AIN'T
BEEN HEARIN'
YOUR KNUCKLES
ON MY DOOR.



SEE, WHEN A MAN WANTS SOMETHIN'
FROM ANOTHER MAN, I FIGURE THE
BEST WAY TO HANDLE IT IS MAN TO
MAN-- WHICH IS MAYBE WHY I
LIKE THE RING SO MUCH.

YOU GOT
TO EARN
MY RING.
BOY.

NO FIGHT
ON THAT
SCORE, BUT
I AM RANKED
#10 NOW...

WAIT A MINUTE-- I JUST SAW THE NEW RANKINGS--YEAH, MAYBE I DO REMEMBER THE NAME DUNFEY... AND YOUR PICTURE...

TROUBLE IS, THE OTHER NINE GUYS BETWEEN ME AN' YOU ARE MORE INTERESTED IN YOU THAN ME.

ACTUALLY, THERE'S THIRTEEN OF 'EM, IF YOU COUNT BOTH THE WORLD PRIZEFIGHTING COUNCIL AND THE WORLD PRIZEFIGHTING AUTHORITY...

... AND WHY SHOULD THEY RISK LOSIN' TO ME WHEN THEY CAN DREAM ABOUT A WIN AGAINST YOU? SO MY TRAINER RUDY QUINN SAYS OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO JUMP RIGHT OVER THOSE GUYS STRAIGHT TO YOU.

I KNOW RUDY... ALMOST ASKED HIM TO BE MY TRAINER ONCE... CUZ HE'S SELDOM WRONG ABOUT ANYTHING...

BUT TELL ME... WHY YOU FIGHT, BOY?

I'M GOOD AT IT--I LIKE TO HIT.

WHITE BOY LIKE YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT, YOU HATE ME, MAYBE? HATE WHAT I AM?

YOU MEAN THE CHAMP?

I MEAN DEEPER THAN THAT. I ONLY BECAME THE CHAMP-- I'M TALKIN' ABOUT WHAT I AM BACK TO WHEN I WAS BORN.

LOOK, I WANNA TELL YOU SOMETHIN', GREENE...

YOU GIMME THIS SHOT... WHEN I STEP THROUGH THE ROPES, AIN'T NO WAY I AIN'T GONNA NOTICE YOU'RE DARKER'N ME.

AND IF I WIN-- I AIN'T STUPID-- I KNOW THE VICTORY'LL BE BIGGER JUST CUZ YOU'RE BLACK.

BUT LEMME ALSO TELL YOU SOMETHIN' ELSE...

I DON'T CARE.

CUZ THAT BELT YOU GOT STAYS THE SAME COLOR NO MATTER WHO WEARS IT.

SO DON'T PENALIZE ME BECAUSE YOU'RE BLACK-- OR BECAUSE I'M WHITE.



IN MIDTOWN A FEW DAYS LATER, WHERE GOTHAM'S RENTS ARE HIGHEST...



THE OTHER FIGHTERS--
THE GUYS WHO WOULD
GIVEN ME THE TOUGH
FIGHTS WHEN I
NEEDED 'EM--



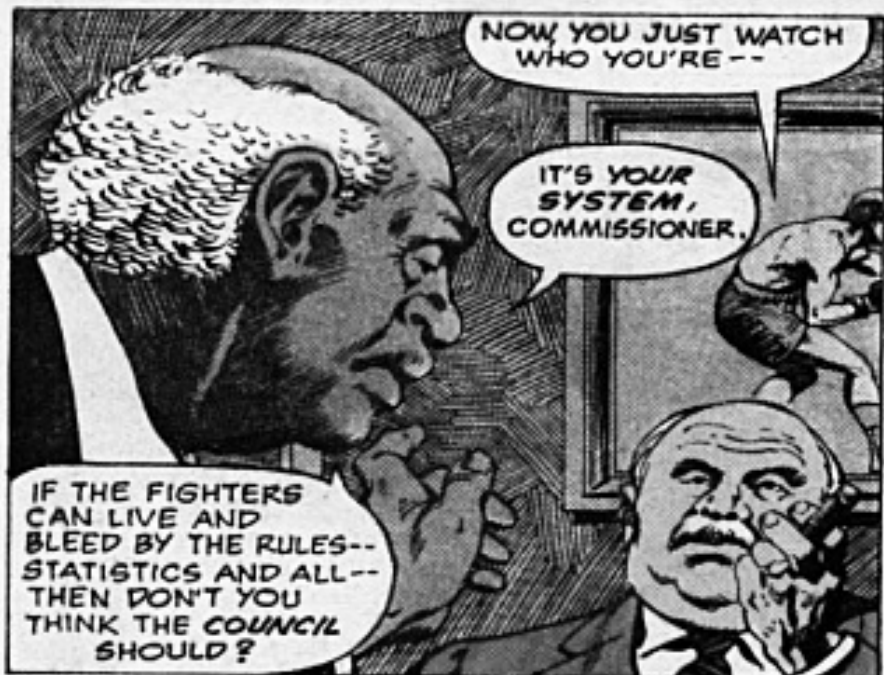
--THEY WERE TOO SELFISH
TO WASTE A SPOT ON
THEIR DANCE CARDS.

THEY DIDN'T WANNA RISK
THEIR OWN SHOT AT THE
CHAMP OR THEIR HOPES FOR
A BIG-MONEY REMATCH
BY LOSIN' TO ME--



--SO IF
YOU ASK ME,
I BEAT EVERY
ONE OF 'EM BY
FORFEIT--

--AND IF YOU
WOULDA FORCED
'EM TO TAKE ME
ON, I'DA BEEN
IN THE RING
THREE DAYS
EARLY WITH MY
GLOVES ALREADY
LACED!



NOW YOU JUST WATCH
WHO YOU'RE--

IT'S YOUR
SYSTEM,
COMMISSIONER.

IF THE FIGHTERS
CAN LIVE AND
BLEED BY THE RULES--
STATISTICS AND ALL--
THEN DON'T YOU
THINK THE COUNCIL
SHOULD?



EVERY SYSTEM IS IMPERFECT,
QUINN, AND IT'S MY JOB
TO SEE THAT THE
SYSTEM--

DOES WHAT?
AWARD ONLY
HALF A CROWN
IN THE FIRST
PLACE?



THANKS TO YOU AND
YOUR COMPETITION
ACROSS THE STREET,
ANY GUY WHO WANTS
TO BE TRUE CHAMPION
OF THE WORLD HAS
TO GO OUT AND
WIN IT TWICE--

--BEFORE HE CAN
DEFEND HIS PRIZE
ONCE--AND ONLY
IF YOU ALLOW IT!



LISTEN, YOU
BENT-NOSED
LUMP-FACED
ARROGANT--

HE DIDN'T MEAN
IT, COMMISSIONER--HE'S
JUST ALL HOT-UP, WANTIN'
THIS BOUT SO BAD HE'S
READY TO FIGHT THE TRAFFIC
LIGHTS JUST TO GET TO A
BUS HONKIN' ITS HORN
OFF-KEY.

IS THAT RIGHT, RUDY? WELL, HE'S HONKIN' OFF AT SOMETHING A LOT BIGGER THAN A *BUS* RIGHT NOW, SO I'D ADVISE HIM TO--

LISTEN-- I GOT YOU *PURCELL* WHEN YOU NEEDED HIM, DIDN'T I?

THIS IS NO TIME TO BE CALLING IN THE MARKERS, RUDY-- CLIMATE'S *BAD* FOR IT--AND BESIDES, THIS PROPOSED FIGHT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH--

MAYBE NOT, BUT IT GOT A LOT TO DO WITH *MAKIN' MONEY*.

MAYBE IT *AIN'T* A CINCINCH--OR EVEN *LIKELY*-- BUT WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO SEE MY BOY DESTROY THE CHAMPION OF THE WORLD?

THE *BLACK* CHAMPION OF THE WORLD?

ALL RIGHT, RUDY.

YOU'VE GOT YOUR SANCTION.

THAT'S A TWO BUCK MAGAZINE, MAC.





I WASN'T GOING TO STEAL IT!

NOBODY SAID YOU WAS, MAC, BUT THIS AIN'T NO LIE-BERRY.

ADULTS ONLY

YOU MUST BE 18



HERE!!

GEORGE STRAITE PIVOTS AND STALKS AWAY...

...PAST THE FAMILIAR BAR HE NEVER ENTERS...



HEY, DIDJA HEAR DeMANSKY'S GONNA REF THE FIGHT NEXT WEEK.

THEY HADDA TOSS IN SOME KINDA DRAW...

WITH THAT BUM DUNFEY, IT'S THE CHUMP AGAINST THE CHAMP.



HEY, I SEEN DUNFEY FIGHT-- HE AIN'T BAD.

HE COULD BUST UP YOUR FACE REAL GOOD!

YEAH? AND HOW 'BOUT YOU CHUMP?--NOT THAT YOUR FACE NEEDS IT.



SWOKK

...FINALLY REACHING THE SANCTUARY OF HIS HOME...



THE TREMBLING HAND CLUTCHED AROUND IT MEANS NOTHING; THE MAGAZINE ISN'T WORTH TWO CENTS, LET ALONE TWO BUCKS...

STILL, THE GREAT JAKE DeMANSKY HAS BEEN GEORGE STRAITE'S IDOL FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS...

...A REAL MAN, A SCRAPPER WHO COULD EASILY TAKE OUT THESE UPSTART JUNGLE BUMS OF TODAY...

...AS WELL AS GEORGE STRAITE'S ONLY CONSTANT COMPANION AND VALIANT VINDICATOR OF THE GENES, HERE IN THIS HAVEN OF WHITE FLESH AND DARK THOUGHTS.

NOW THE GREAT MAN IS FINALLY RETURNING TO THE RING, AND GEORGE STRAITE IS OF TWO MINDS ABOUT IT...

...MAINLY BECAUSE IT IS A RING IN WHICH A NIGGER IS CERTAIN TO HUMILIATE ONE OF JAKE'S FELLOW WHITE MEN.

AND YET... JAKE WAS GREAT.

HMM.

FINALLY, IN DARKNESS, GEORGE STRAITE HAS SLEPT ON IT LONG ENOUGH...

... AND, WITH SINGLE-MINDED INTENT, JAKE DEMANSKY'S BRILLIANT CAREER MUST BE LAID TO REST.

JAKE D.
HEAVYWEIGHT

YOU WANT ME TO WIN, DON'T YOU, RUDY?

ME? UH-UHN. I JUST LIKE FILLIN' MY NOSE WITH THE FRAGRANCE OF THIS GYM WHILE I WASTE MY TIME TRAININ' A LOSER.

C'MON, RUDY--YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

CUZ I AN ALL-KNOWIN' DARK MAN WITH THE POWER OF VOODOO- SIGHT?

YEAH.

GREENE'S AS BLACK AS YOU-- AND YOU WANT ME TO BEAT HIM?

I WANT YOU TO WIN, BOY, IF IT MEANS WHIPPIN' HIM, THEN I WANT YOU TO WHIP HIM.

BUT WHY, RUDY? IF THE COMMISSIONER, DEEP IN HIS HEART, WOULD LIKE TO SEE A WHITE GUY BEAT THE BLACK CHAMP, WHY DOESN'T THE OPPOSITE HOLD TRUE FOR--

YOUR EARS AIN'T GOT CAULIFLOWERS YET, BOY.

OR... MAYBE I GOT A LOT TO PROVE-- TO MYSELF.

SUCH AS?

SUCH AS... I AIN'T LIKE THE COMMISSIONER.

BUT YOU'RE NOT SURE?

MAYBE I MORE SECURE IN MY SKIN-- WITH THE LUXURY OF HAVIN' NOTHIN' TO PROVE...

OR--? THERE WAS AN "OR" IN YOUR VOICE.

THE TRUTH, BOY? NO... I DO MY BEST, BUT NO... I AIN'T SURE.

I ONLY KNOW NONE OF US WAS AROUND BEFORE WE WAS BORN PICKIN' OUT ANY COLORS.

HEY--EASY ON THAT BAG.

THAT WAS HONEST, RUDY-- AND THAT'S ALL A FIGHTER CAN ASK FROM HIS TRAINER.

MAYBE SO'S WE ALL GOT A CHOICE... BETWEEN BEIN' LIKE THE COMMISSIONER ... AND AIMIN' OUR EYBS A LITTLE MORE TRUE.

BY USIN' VOODOO-SIGHT?

WAYNE MANOR:

BIG FIGHT TOMORROW NIGHT, ALFRED.

YES, SIR, I PLAN TO WATCH IT ON THE TELEVISION--

BUT YOU EVER FIGURE IT OUT? WHY GOD HADDA PUT SKINS IN THE WAY OF HEARTS?

--IF ONLY TO SEE MR. DEMANSKY GRACE THE RING AGAIN.

WHO DO YOU LIKE, ALFRED?

I SHOULD HAVE TO SAY THE CHAMP IS A PROHIBITIVE FAVORITE, SIR... BUT THEN, THAT'S WHAT I SAID ABOUT HAGLER AGAINST DURAN AND--

TWO UNDEREDUCATED MEN POUNDING SKULLS UNTIL ONE BLEEDS TOO MUCH TO SEE OR COLLAPSES WITH A CONCUSSION.

COME, COME, JULIA, IT'S JUST THE MANLY ART OF SELF--

IT'S VIOLENCE, PURE AND SIMPLE, AND IT'S HORRID.

WHY MUST YOU LIKE ANY OF IT?

PERHAPS IF YOU AND MR. WAYNE HAD YOUR SKULLS REPEATEDLY PUNCHED--

MAYBE IT CAN'T BE DEFENDED, JULIA.

MAYBE ITS APPEAL IS SOMETHING SO PRIMITIVE WE CAN'T EVEN UNDERSTAND IT. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, IT MIGHT WELL BE VICARIOUS CATHARSIS WHICH--

UH, EXCUSE ME, JULIA-- BUT I JUST REMEMBERED A PRESSING ENGAGEMENT.

HMP--WITH MISS VICKI VALE, NO DOUBT.

HERE'S THE NOTE-- PASSED ON TO US BY THE EDITOR OF RINGSIDE MAGAZINE. JUST READ IT.

"JAKE THE GREAT CANNOT BECOME JAKE OF THE JUNGLE. AS ALL TRUE MEN KNOW, EVOLUTION ENDS IN SUCCESS OR DEATH." SIGNED: "A FAN."

M-HM--SO CRYPTICALLY WORDED, YOU CAN'T TELL IF IT'S A THREAT AGAINST DeMANSKY OR NOT...

...BUT IT'S OBVIOUSLY FROM A NUT.





WE BOTH BREATHE THE SAME AIR CUZ WE BOTH COMIN' FROM THE SAME PLACE THAT SAW FIT TO GIVE US LUNGS AND NOSES TO SMELL THE BRIMSTONE WHEN WE ONLY WANNA SNIFF THE FLOWERS.





"WAIT A MINUTE--HERE HE IS--THE IMMORTAL, THE GREAT, THE LEGENDARY LIVING LEGEND HIMSELF--FORMER HEAVY-WEIGHT CHAMPION OF THE WORLD AND VETERAN OF SOME OF THE GREATEST WARS EVER STAGE, ON CANVAS..."



"JAKE DEMANSKY!"

"IF WE COULD TURN THE CLOCK FORTY YEARS BACK ON THIS MAN, NOW THEN WE'D HAVE A FIGHT..."



IN SILENCE, GEORGE STRAITE SCREAMS THE LOUDEST OF ALL.



AND YET THE WORDS ARE OVERPLAYED, TOO THEATRICAL...

... MAKING IT FITTINGLY IRONIC, THEN, THAT THE MAN WHO SPURNED BOTH STAGE AND RING HAS TURNED THE GREATEST FIGHTER ALIVE INTO A MERE HAM ACTOR.



HANDS TREMBLING, A PIECE OF COLD HARDNESS PRESSED INTO HIS LEFT KIDNEY, GEORGE STRAITE TENSES FOR THE DRAMA SOON TO BE UNLEASHED...



"BOTH MEN MISS WITH OPENING LEFT JABS-- GREENE SMOOTHLY, DUNFEY WITH LUMBERING AWKWARDNESS..."



"AND THEN THERE'S THE BELL FOR THE FIRST ROUND!"



"AND NOW THEY BACK OFF TO CIRCLE EACH OTHER MORE WARILY..."

"ROUND TWO AND-- THERE-- GREENE
FINALLY SCORES WITH A CHOPPING
RIGHT AS DUNFEY BORES IN."



IT'S NOW ROUND THREE
AND A LACKLUSTER
EXHIBITION IT'S BEEN--

--THE CHAMP SEEMINGLY
CONTENT TO PEPPER
DUNFEY WITH ALMOST
TOYFUL JABS HAVING
LITTLE OR NO EFFECT.

"I'LL SAY THIS--
IT'S BEEN A CLEAN
FIGHT, AND WE'VE
SEEN REMARKABLY
LITTLE OF REFEREE
DeMANSKY..."

"...BUT I SUSPECT
THE CHAMP IS
SIMPLY PROLONG-
ING THE SHOW TO
JUSTIFY HIS TEN
MILLION DOLLAR
PURSE."

IT'S WORSE THAN
GEORGE STRAITE
IMAGINED...



"BUT WAIT-- A LEFT HOOK FROM
DUNFEY OUT OF NOWHERE!"



"AND INCREDIBLY,
IT SENDS THE
CHAMP TO THE
CANVAS!"



BUT WAIT--
PERHAPS WITH
ENOUGH PATIENCE,
MIRACLES CAN
HAPPEN...

"AND YET, IT WAS NOT A
CRUSHING BLOW!"

ONE... TWO...
THREE...



GET UP AN'
FIGHT, GREENE--
I DON'T WANNA "WIN"
THE TITLE THIS WAY!

GET IN THE NEUTRAL CORNER, DUNFEY, OR I CAN'T CONTINUE THE COUNT!

WHERE'S YOUR PRIDE? GET UP AND BE A MAN! WHAT YOU GOT AIN'T GOT A PRICE!



"FOR SOME REASON DUNFEY IS ENRAGED, FIGHTING AGAINST DEMANSKY TO REACH THE FALLEN CHAMP."

YOU DON'T DESERVE THE TITLE IF YOU'RE GONNA THROW IT AWAY FOR MONEY!

CHUMP

"HE KICKED HIM! DUNFEY KICKED GREENE WHILE HE WAS DOWN."

FOR MONEY?!

YOU THINK I'D GO DOWN FOR MONEY?!



BOOF



UTTER PANDEMONIUM, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! NEVER BEFORE HAVE I WITNESSED SUCH SHEER UNBRIDLED BRUTALITY IN THE FACES OF TWO HUMAN BEINGS!



"THE CORNER MEN ARE NOW SURGING INTO THE RING IN HOPES OF BREAKING UP WHAT HAS BECOME A FURIOUS WAR COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTROL!"

"THERE ARE NO RULES NOW--
NO HOLDS BARRED--"

"IT'S HOPELESS NOW--
THE REFEREE UTTERLY
HELPLESS AGAINST
THESE TWO MEN
LITERALLY TRYING
TO KILL EACH OTHER!"

"JAKE DeMANSKY'S
RETURN TO THE
RING HAS BECOME
A CHARADE--"

"--AND THE FANS HERE
AT RINGSIDE-- NOW
ANIMAL-LIKE-- ARE
GOING POSITIVELY
BERSERK IN A BLOODY
ORGY OF UNRESTRAINED
VIOLENCE."

"A MOCKERY OF THE SPORT HE
MADE GREAT AND THEN LATER
ESCHEWED--AND THE MAN HIMSELF
NOW RESEMBLES A FEEBLE SHELL
OF HIMSELF, CAUGHT IN THE MIDST
OF THIS SHAMEFUL CARNIVAL
OF CARNAGE."

THAT GLINT
FROM THE
CROWD...

NOT A GOLD
RING...

... AND NOT
A CIGARETTE
LIGHTER...

A
GUN

LOOK AT THAT
BLOOD!

"THAT PUNCH
WAS ENOUGH
TO FELL A
MULE--AND
YET DUNFEY
TAKES IT!"

HOLD IT!

THE
BATMAN!

BUNFF

"AND NOW DUNFEY UNLOADS
A MURDEROUS HAYMAKER
ON GREENE!"

"OR PERHAPS IT'S ONLY
THE STIFFNESS OF HATE
THAT'S KEEPING THEM
ON THEIR FEET!"

"BUT BOTH OF THESE
MEN ARE SIMPLY
TOO STUBBORN--
TOO FILLED WITH
ADRENALINE--
TO DROP!"

"THIS IS AN EGREGIOUS
DISPLAY-- A SELF-
EVIDENTIARY DEBACLE
OF THE WORST
STRIPE!"

STOP IT--
PLEASE!!

JAKE DeMANSKY'S SHRILL SCREAM
REACHES GEORGE STRAITE LIKE A
HURLED BLADE OF JAGGED EDGE.

THE PAIN-- THE SHAME--
CANNOT BE BORNE.

HE
WHIRLS.

AND--

THE SOUND RIPS
THROUGH THE
ARENA, ITS COLD
HARD POWER A
BOOMING DEATH
KNELL IMPOSSIBLE
TO IGNORE...

BLAM!

EVEN ITS FADING REVERBERATION IS MORE COMMANDING BY FAR THAN A BELL; THE ALREADY-INFAMOUS "SIX-MINUTE ROUND OF CHAOS" FINALLY HALTS.



A... GUNSHOT?



EVERYBODY--
OUT OF THE
RING!

THIS WAY,
MR. DeMANSKY
-- HURRY,
PLEASE!

SOMEBODY
GOT SHOT!

AND AFTER
THE FACT:
ONE MORE
PUNCH...



THE KAYO DENIED
IN THE RING.

--WOULD-BE ASSASSIN TAKEN INTO
CUSTODY BY THE WOUNDED BATMAN
HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS GEORGE
STRAITE OF GOTHAM.



AS FOR THE FIGHT ITSELF,
THE COMMISSIONER HAS DECLARED
IT **NO CONTEST** AND THE CHAMPION
MICHAEL GREENE RETAINS HIS
CROWN PENDING INVESTIGATION.

GREENE WAS NOT PERSUADED
BY YOUR TALK, WOAD--I
WANT YOU TO DEMONSTRATE
OUR DISPLEASURE BY MAKING
AN EXAMPLE OF HIM.



BUT,
BOSS, THAT
WON'T--

I'VE MADE NEW
RULES, WOAD. UNDER
THOSE RULES, GREENE
WAS MARKED TO LOSE
HIS TITLE TONIGHT --
AND THE NIGHT IS
NOT YET OVER!

NOW
GO!



I...I DIDN'T
MEAN TO
KICK YOU,
GREENE...

...BUT AS MUCH AS I WANTED
TO WIN THAT BELT... FOR PRIDE,
FOR ACHIEVEMENT...

...I COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE
YOU LOSE IT FOR SOMETHING
AS CHEAP AS MONEY.

IN THE GLOOM, THROUGH
DARK GLASSES AND EYES
SWOLLEN NEARLY SHUT,
IT IS LIKE LOOKING INTO
MIRRORS OF X-RAYED
GHOSTS.

I TOLD YOU,
DUNFEY...

TWENTY PACES INTO
THE NIGHT, SOMEONE
ELSE GETS HIS SHOT
AT THE CHAMP--

BRAM

-- AND MICHAEL
GREENE FALLS,
STRIPPED OF BELT,
CROWN, AND TITLES
FOREVER.

MY GOD, GREENE--I WAS
BLIND! ALL THE MONEY
IN THE WORLD ISN'T
WORTH WHAT YOU HAD...

ONLY
ONE THING
WAS!

AND THAT THING
BLEEDS FROM HIM, IN
WANING GOITS.

MAYBE, IT CAN'T BE
DEFENDED WITH
EUPHEMISTIC
PLATITUDES
ABOUT SOME
MANLY ART.

MAYBE THE FINAL
PRIZE, AND THE
ULTIMATE PRICE,
IS NOTHING BUT MORE
OF THE SAME, COLORED
BY THE DESPERATION
OF PRIDE, VENGEANCE
... AND YES, HATE.

IT WASN'T
FOR MONEY.

IF SO, THEN THERE ARE
AT LEAST TWO MEN THIS
NIGHT WILLING AND
EAGER TO TAKE UP
THE GAUNTLET, FOR
VIOLENCE DOES
BREED MORE OF
THE SAME.

ANYTHING LESS WILL
ALLOW KILLERS TO
ROAM BLACK STREETS
WITH THE ARROGANCE
OF MAD DOGS.

SUCH...
NICE...
KIDS...

IN THE NEXT
DETECTIVE:
THE EXPLOSIVE
CONCLUSION--
Boxing!